

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1-9 and 11-14 remain in the application and are subject to examination.

Claims 1, 2, 12, and 14 have been amended.

Under the heading "Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 112" on page 2 of the above-identified Office Action, claim 14 has been rejected as being indefinite under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claim 14 has been amended to depend from claim 13 to provide proper antecedent basis.

It is accordingly believed that the claims meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. The above-noted changes to the claims are provided solely for clarification or cosmetic reasons. The changes are neither provided for overcoming the prior art nor do they narrow the scope of the claim for any reason related to the statutory requirements for a patent.

Under the heading "Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102" on page 2 of the above-identified Office Action, claims 1, 2, 7-9, and 11 have been rejected as being fully anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,541,541 to Salamina et al. in view of U.S. under 35 U.S.C. § 102. Applicant respectfully traverses with regard to claims 8, 9, and 11.

Claim 8 defines a method for detecting a first signal and a second signal in a push-pull transmission method, which comprises the steps of:

comparing the first and second signals in each case with a detection threshold having a first value;

comparing one of the first and second signals with a detection threshold having a second value being lower than the first value after the other of the first and second signals has reached the detection threshold with the first value.

Salamina et al. do not teach comparing two signals with a threshold having a first value and then comparing one of those signals with a threshold having a second lower value after the other signal has reached the first value of the threshold.

Salamina et al. teach a circuit for ensuring that one transistor of a push-pull output is turned off before the other transistor of the push-pull output is turned on (column 2, lines 34-38). The comparators 16 and 18 are constructed to each have only a single threshold. These trip points are fixed according to physical parameters of the comparators (See column 8, lines 47-65).

The trip point A of comparator 16 should be set high enough to ensure that PMOS transistor 12 is off (not conducting) before comparator 16 triggers high

and that the trip point B of comparator 18 should be set low enough to ensure that NMOS transistor 14 is off (not conducting) before comparator 18 triggers low (See column 5, lines 37-51).

The outputs of the comparators 16, 18 are used by the respective control circuits 20, 22 to drive the transistors 12, 14 (See column 4, line 62 through column 5, line 36 with reference to the timing diagram in Fig. 6). The control circuits 20, 22, which are shown in Figs. 5 and 5a, are simple combinational circuits.

Each of the control circuits 20, 22 outputs a signal to control one of the transistors 12, 14. As long as the signal level of the output of one of the control circuits 20, 22 is high enough to turn on one of the transistors 12, 14, this signal level functions to prevent the other control circuit from turning on the other transistor. A threshold is not being lowered.

Even if the Examiner has the opinion that the combination of a control circuit 20, 22, which has logic gates that perform a blocking function, and a comparator 16, 18 is comparing a signal with a threshold, this would have the effect of increasing the value of the threshold. It certainly does not decrease the value of the threshold. Applicant believes that claim 8 is not anticipated.

Claims 1 and 12 have been amended to include limitations similar to those discussed in claim 8. Support for the changes may be found by referring to

claim 8 or to the specification at page 6, line 16 through page 7, line 2.

Applicant believes that the discussion of Salamina et al. provided above shows that claims 1 and 12, as amended, are not anticipated.

Under the heading "Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103" on page 4 of the above-identified Office Action, claims 1-4, 7-9, and 11-12 have been rejected as being fully anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,953,070 to Lenz under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

Applicant respectfully traverses in regard to claims 8, 9, and 11.

Claim 8 defines a method for detecting a first signal and a second signal in a push-pull transmission method, which comprises the steps of:

comparing the first and second signals in each case with a detection threshold having a first value;

comparing one of the first and second signals with a detection threshold having a second value being lower than the first value after the other of the first and second signals has reached the detection threshold with the first value.

Lenz teaches a blocking mechanism to prevent one output transistor of a push-pull output from being turned on before the other transistor of the push-pull output is turned off. The comparators K1, K2 compare the base-emitter voltages of T1, T2 with fixed references voltages UR1, UR2. The outputs of the comparators are sent to the inputs of simple combinational logic circuitry [(G1,

B1), or (G2, B2)] to ensure that one transistor is blocked or cannot turn on while the other transistor is on.

Applicant believes it is clear that this blocking mechanism cannot be equated with the step of comparing one of the first and second signals with a detection threshold having a second value being lower than the first value after the other of the first and second signals has reached the detection threshold with the first value. The blocking mechanism of Lenz simply prevents the comparator from having any influence in the decision as to whether to turn on a transistor. The threshold is not being lowered. Applicant believes that claim 8 is not anticipated. Applicant believes that amended claims 1 and 12 are not anticipated for similar reasons.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claims 1, 8, or 12. Claims 1, 8, and 12 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art. The dependent claims are believed to be patentable as well because they all are ultimately dependent on either claim 1, 8, or 12.

Finally, applicant appreciatively acknowledges the Examiner's statement that claims 5, 6, and 13 "would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims." Applicant also appreciatively acknowledges the Examiner's indication that claim 14 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §

112, second paragraph and if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In light of the discussion above, applicants respectfully believe that rewriting of claims 5, 6, 13, and 14 (other than to satisfy 112) is unnecessary at this time.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-9 and 11-14 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate receiving a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

Petition for extension is herewith made. The extension fee for response within a period of one month pursuant to Section 1.136(a) in the amount of \$120.00 in accordance with Section 1.17 is enclosed herewith.

Please charge any other fees that might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner Greenberg Sterner LLP, No. 12-1099.

Appl. No. 10/669,071
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Respectfully submitted,

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MPW:cgm

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